

# Syllabus

## Syllabus outline

Syllabus component	Teaching hours*	
	SL	HL
<p><b>Readers, writers and texts</b></p> <p>Non-literary texts are chosen from a variety of sources and media to represent as wide a range of text types as possible, and works are chosen from a variety of literary forms. The study of the non-literary texts and works focuses on the nature of language and communication and the nature of literature and its study. This study includes the investigation of how texts themselves operate as well as the contexts and complexities of production and reception. Focus is on the development of personal and critical responses to the particulars of communication.</p>	50	80
<p><b>Time and space</b></p> <p>Non-literary texts and literary works are chosen from a</p>	50	80

<p>variety of sources, literary forms and media that reflect a range of historical and/or cultural perspectives. Their study focuses on the contexts of language use and the variety of ways literary and non-literary texts might both reflect and shape society at large. The focus is on the consideration of personal and cultural perspectives, the development of broader perspectives, and an awareness of the ways in which context is tied to meaning.</p>		
<p><b>Intertextuality: connecting texts</b></p> <p>Non-literary texts and literary works are chosen from a variety of sources, literary forms and media in a way that allows students an opportunity to extend their study and make fruitful comparisons. Their study focuses on intertextual relationships with possibilities to explore various topics, thematic concerns, generic conventions, modes or literary traditions that have been introduced throughout the course. The focus is on</p>	50	80

the development of critical response grounded in an understanding of the complex relationships among texts.		
<b>Total teaching hours</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>240</b>

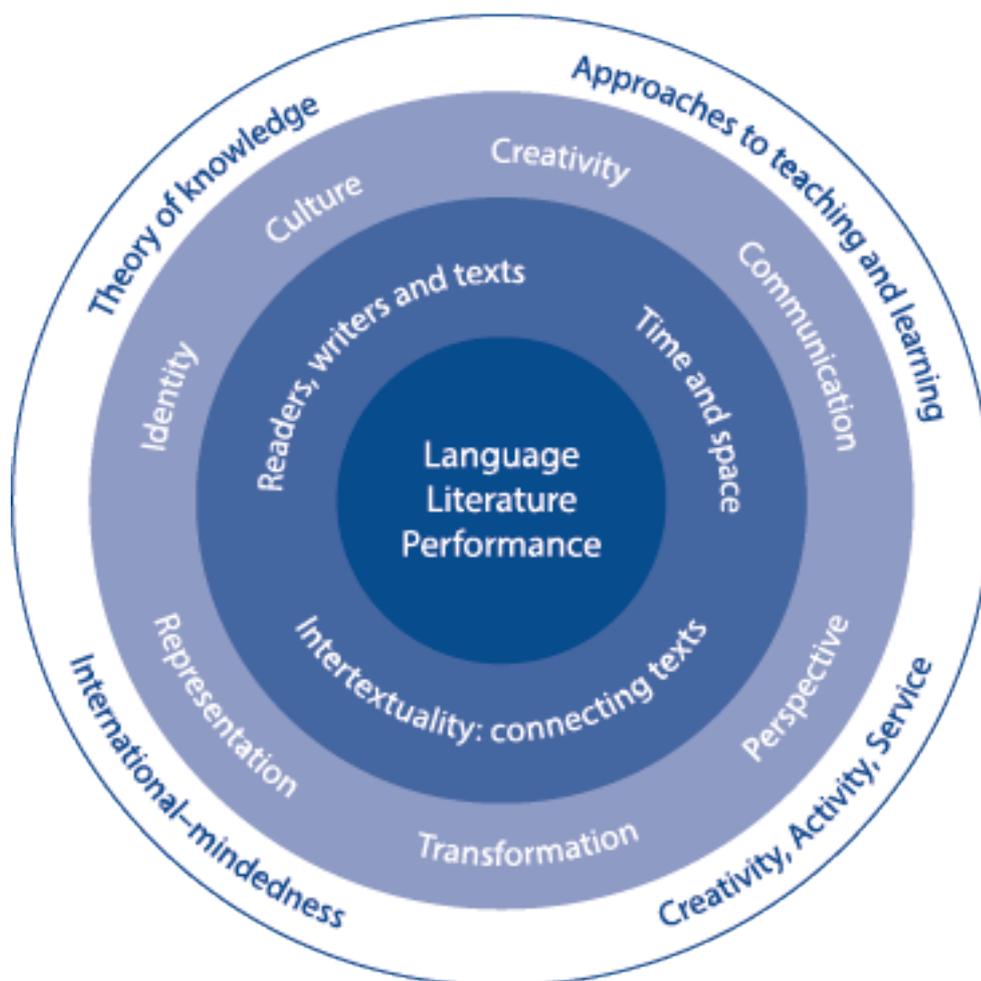
\* The number of hours indicated for each area of exploration should not be taken as either prescriptive or restrictive, since these areas will many times overlap in the study of a text. Careful planning of class activities is necessary to ensure that there will be a balance between the types of approaches to texts favoured by each of the areas. There should also be a balance between the time of study allotted to non-literary texts and literary works within each area.

The recommended teaching time is 240 hours to complete HL courses and 150 hours to complete SL courses as stated in the document *General regulations: Diploma Programme* (see article 8.2).

## Syllabus content

### Model for studies in language and literature

Studies in language and literature are built on the notion of conceptual learning in which students engage with central concepts of the discipline in order to become flexible, critical readers of all types of texts. The model below represents the relationship between the three courses in studies of language and literature, their main topics of study, their central concepts, and the way they relate to the principles at the core of the IB DP.



At the heart of the study of all three courses are the domains of language, literature and performance. Each course stresses these elements to a different degree, but all engage with them to some extent.

The study of language, literature and performance, and the development of the relevant skills, is divided into three areas of exploration—the exploration of the nature of the interactions between **readers, writers and texts**; the exploration of how texts interact with **time and space** and the exploration of **intertextuality** and how texts connect with each other. Although these three areas seem to offer an ordered approach to progression through the course, they are, as represented in the diagram, inherently over-lapping, iterative or circular and allow for flexibility in course design.

The entire pursuit of studies in language and literature is tied to core elements of the DP and to the overarching principles of IB learning, theory of knowledge (TOK), creativity, activity and service (CAS),

the extended essay, the approaches to teaching and approaches to learning, and international-mindedness.

### **What students will learn in the language A: language and literature course**

In the language A: language and literature course students will learn about the complex and dynamic nature of language and explore both its practical and aesthetic dimensions. They will explore the crucial role language plays in communication, reflecting experience and shaping the world. Students will also learn about their own roles as producers of language and develop their productive skills. Throughout the course, students will explore the various ways in which language choices, text types, literary forms and contextual elements all effect meaning. Through close analysis of various text types and literary forms, students will consider their own interpretations, as well as the critical perspectives of others, to explore how such positions are shaped by cultural belief systems and to negotiate meanings for texts. Students will engage in activities that involve them in the process of production and help shape their critical awareness of how texts and their associated visual and audio elements work together to influence the audience/reader and how audiences/readers open up the possibilities of texts. With its focus on a wide variety of communicative acts, the course is meant to develop sensitivity to the foundational nature, and pervasive influence, of language in the world at large.

### **Course requirements**

Across the three areas of exploration at least four works must be studied in the SL course and at least six works must be studied in the HL course.

The IB has created an extensive *Prescribed reading list* of authors in a wide range of languages to accompany studies in language and literature courses. This searchable online list provides teachers with a resource from which they will be able to select a group of authors that guarantees diversity and compliance with course requirements. Six authors have been suggested as a starting point in the exploration of the literature of each language. Teachers can decide whether to follow this recommendation or not.

Each area of exploration must involve the study of both literary works and non-literary texts, with equal time devoted to the study of each. Texts and works must be chosen from a variety of cultures and languages. In selecting them, teachers should attempt to achieve a balance in relation to text-type, literary form, period and place, and endeavor to include a variety of forms the human and artistic experience can take.

### **Selection of literary works**

#### **SL students must study at least four works of which:**

- a minimum of one must be written originally in the language studied, by an author on the *Prescribed reading list*
- a minimum of one must be a work in translation written by an author on the *Prescribed reading list*
- two can be chosen freely—from the *Prescribed reading list* or elsewhere—and may be in translation.

There must be a minimum of one work for each area of exploration. Works must be selected to cover two literary forms, two periods and two places as defined on the *Prescribed reading list* covering at least two continents.

#### **HL students must study at least six works of which:**

- a minimum of two must be written originally in the language studied, by authors on the *Prescribed reading list*
- a minimum of two must be works in translation written by authors on the *Prescribed reading list*
- two can be chosen freely—from the *Prescribed reading list* or elsewhere—and may be in translation.

There must be a minimum of two works for each of the areas of exploration. Works must be selected to cover three literary forms, three periods and three places as defined on the *Prescribed reading list* covering at least two continents.

A work is defined for studies in language and literature courses as one single literary text, such as a novel, autobiography or biography; two or more shorter literary texts such as novellas; 5-10 short stories; 5-8 essays; 10-15 letters; or a substantial section or the whole of a long poem (at least 600 lines) or 15-20 shorter poems.

Where more than one text is studied as part of a work, texts must be from the same author.

The ideas and skills introduced in each of the areas are integral to and embedded throughout the course, and there is a significant overlap. Teachers should take into account the type and range of works to be studied, the time required for each area of the course, the development of student skills, learning outcomes, performance work to be undertaken and assessment deadlines when making decisions regarding teaching sequence. More guidance on course construction models is provided in the teacher support material (TSM).

## Authors

One same author cannot be studied twice within a language A: language and literature course. Additionally, a language A: language and literature candidate may not study:

- an author that they may already be studying as part of another studies in language and literature course
- an author that they may already be studying as part of a language B course

A language A: language and literature candidate may write their extended essay on an author studied as part of the course provided they choose a different work by that author.

## Literary forms

The *Prescribed reading list* includes four literary forms. At SL two of the literary forms must be selected for the study of works. At HL three literary forms must be studied.

## Period

The *Prescribed reading list* contains different periods, which classify authors according to the century/centuries in which they lived. The language A: language and literature syllabus at standard level must include works by authors from at least two different periods. At HL, the syllabus must include works by authors from at least three different periods.

## Place

The *Prescribed reading list* indicates the countries or regions with which authors are closely associated. The language A: language and literature syllabus at SL must include works by authors from at least two different countries or regions and must cover at least two continents. At HL, the syllabus must include works by authors from at least three different countries or regions and must cover at least two continents.

### **Selection of non-literary texts**

The following list of non-literary text types is designed to help construct the course, as well as to encourage variety and exploration. The list is not exhaustive and it must be emphasised that students are not expected to learn the features or characteristics of them all. The skills of analysing one text type can be transferrable to another.

Teachers should ensure there is a balance between the time of study allotted to non-literary texts and literary works within each area or in the course as a whole.

Advertisement	Encyclopedia entry	Parody*
Appeal	Film/television	Pastiche*
Biography*	Guide book	Photographs
Blog	Infographic	Radio broadcast
Brochure/leaflet	Interview	Report
Cartoon	Letter (formal)*	Screenplay
Diagram	Letter (informal) *	Set of instructions
Diary*	Magazine article	Speech*
Electronic texts	Manifesto*	Textbook
Essay*	Memoir*	Travel writing*

**Table 1** *A list of text types which may help teachers construct the course*

\* In some of their manifestations, these text types could be considered literary forms, usually within the category of non-fiction. They will be regarded in this course as non-literary texts, unless a collection of texts by a single author is studied as a literary work.

### Area of exploration—readers, writers and texts

“A word after a word after a word is power.”

— *Margaret Atwood*

This area introduces students to the nature of language and literature and its study. The investigation undertaken involves close attention to the details of texts in a variety of types and literary forms so that students learn about the choices made by creators and the ways in which meaning is communicated through words, image, and sound. At the same time, study will focus on the role receivers play in generating meaning as students move from personal response to understanding

and interpretation influenced by the classroom community. Students will learn to understand the creativity of language, the relationship between language and thought and the aesthetic nature of literature. Students will see that texts are powerful means to express individual thoughts and feelings, and that their own perspectives as experienced users of language are integral to the effect and success of a communicative act.

Study in this area should be structured to allow students to become more confident in their ability to recognize key textual and rhetorical features and how they create or affect meaning. Non-literary texts and literary works can be chosen that lend themselves to close reading and give students a sense of stylistic, rhetorical and literary elements across a variety of text types and literary forms. The aim is not to enumerate or define various features and study will move beyond the identification of elements or the consideration of individual effects to see the complex constructed nature of texts. While conducting detailed study, learning activities can be structured to introduce students to the ways in which linguistic and literary professionals attend to communicative acts and their concerns. Student writing and response can involve moving between personal and academic response or between the creative and the expository.

Readers, writers and texts aims to introduce students to the skills and approaches required to closely examine texts as well as to introduce metacognitive awareness of the nature of the discipline by considering the following guiding conceptual questions:

1. Why and how do we study language and literature?
2. How are we affected by texts in various ways?
3. In what ways is meaning constructed, negotiated, expressed and interpreted?
4. How does language use vary amongst text types and amongst literary forms?
5. How does the structure or style of a text affect meaning?
6. How do texts offer insights and challenges?

### **Possible links to TOK**

Links to TOK in this area revolve around the question of what kind of knowledge can be constructed from a text, how that knowledge is constructed and the extent to which the meaning of a text can be considered to be fixed. Examples of links to TOK include:

- What do we learn about through the study of a literary text? How is this different from what we learn through the study of a non-literary text?
- In what ways is the kind of knowledge we gain from the study of language and literature different from the kind we gain through the study of other disciplines? Can the study of language and of literature be considered scientific?
- How much of the knowledge we construct through reading a text is determined by authorial intention, by the reader's cultural assumptions and by the purpose valued for a text in a community of readers?
- Are some interpretations of a text better than others? How are multiple interpretations best negotiated?
- In what ways do interpretive strategies vary when reading a literary work and when reading a non-literary text?

### Area of exploration—time and space

"I think the use of language is a very important means by which this species, because of its biological nature, creates a kind of social space, to place itself in interactions with other people."

— *Noam Chomsky*

This area of exploration focuses on the idea that language is a social capacity and as such is intertwined with community, culture and history. It explores the variety of cultural contexts in which texts are produced and read across time and space as well as the ways texts themselves reflect or refract the world at large. Students will examine how cultural conditions can affect language and how these conditions are a product of language. Students will also consider the ways culture and identity influence reception.

Students will investigate ways in which texts may represent, and be understood from, a variety of cultural and historical perspectives. Through this exploration students will recognize the role of relationships among text, self and other, and the ways in which the local and the global connect. These relationships are complex and dynamic. The background of an author and the make-up of an audience are not necessarily clear or easily described. Texts are situated in specific contexts and deal with or represent social, political and cultural concerns particular to a given time and place. For example, a text written to address the concerns of an author in contemporary society can be set in

ancient times. Cultures that are geographically separated can share mores or ideas, while people living in proximity can embrace disparate traditions. Students will consider the intricacies of communication within such a complex societal framework and the implications that language and text take on when produced and read in shifting contexts.

Study and work selection in this area should allow students to explore texts and issues from a variety of places, cultures and/or times. The culture, biography of an author, historical events or narratives of critical reception will be considered and may be researched, but the focus of study will be on the ideas and issues raised by the texts themselves and a consideration of whether these are best understood in relation to an informed consideration of context. In this area of exploration, students examine the ways in which a text may illuminate some aspect of the political or social environment, or the ways in which a more nuanced understanding of events may affect their understanding or interpretation of a text. The study of contexts does not imply a static, one-to-one relationship between a text and the world, but sees the former as a powerful “non-human actor” across time and space.

Time and space aims to broaden student understanding of the open, plural, or cosmopolitan nature of texts ranging from advertisements to poems by considering the following guiding conceptual questions:

1. How important is cultural or historical context to the production and reception of a text?
2. How do we approach texts from different times and cultures to our own?
3. To what extent do texts offer insight into another culture?
4. How does the meaning and impact of a text change over time?
5. How do texts reflect, represent or form a part of cultural practices?
6. How does language represent social distinctions and identities?

### **Possible links to TOK**

Links to TOK are related to the questions of how far the context of production of a text influences or informs its meaning and the extent to which the knowledge a reader can obtain from a text is determined by the context of reception. Examples of such links to TOK include:

- How far can a reader understand a text that was written in a context different from their own and which may have addressed a different audience?

- Is not sharing a world view with an author an obstacle to understand their text?
- What is lost in translation from one language to another?
- How might the approaches to a given time and place of a poet, a cartoonist or a diary-writer and a historian differ?
- Is the notion of a canon helpful in the study and understanding of literature? How does a canon get established? What factors influence its expansion or change over time?

### Area of exploration—intertextuality: connecting texts

“I will not deny that language is based on difference; rather I will argue that it is also based on reference.”

— *Robert Scholes*

This area of exploration focuses on the concerns of intertextuality, or the connections between and among media, text and audience involving diverse traditions and ideas. It focuses on the comparative study of texts so that students may gain deeper appreciation of both unique characteristics of individual texts and complex systems of connection. Throughout the course, students will be able to see similarities and differences among diverse texts. This area allows for a further exploration of literary and linguistic concerns, examples, interpretations and readings by studying a grouping of texts set by the teacher or set in close conversation with a class or groups of students. Students will gain an awareness of how texts can provide critical lenses to reading other texts and of how they can support a text's interpretation by expanding on it or question it by providing a different point of view.

Intertextuality: connecting texts can be approached in a variety of ways, such as:

- through the study of a group of texts from the same text type or literary form (for example, advertisements, drama or short stories respectively)
- a study of chronological development (for example, the tale, the elegy, political oration, the newspaper)
- a consideration of mode (for example, satire, action-adventure, parody)
- an exploration of a topic or concept (for example, fame, gender, power, social code, values, the hero)

- an investigation into a theoretical perspective or debate in language or literature (for example literary value, feminism, cognitive theory, critical discourse theory).

This area of exploration aims to give students a sense of the ways in which texts exist in a system of relationships with other communicative acts past and present. Students will further engage with literary and linguistic traditions and new directions by considering the following guiding conceptual questions:

1. How do texts adhere to and deviate from conventions associated with literary forms or text types?
2. How do conventions and systems of reference evolve over time?
3. In what ways can diverse texts share points of similarity?
4. How valid is the notion of a classic text?
5. How can texts offer multiple perspectives of a single issue, topic or theme?
6. In what ways can comparison and interpretation be transformative?

### **Possible links to TOK**

Links to TOK in this area are related to the question of how the interaction of a text with other texts, brought about explicitly by the author or established by the reader in the act of reception, influence the perception of them and their meaning.

- What are the boundaries between a literary text and a non-literary text, and how are these boundaries determined?
- What kind of knowledge about a text is gained when compared and contrasted with other texts?
- Does knowledge of conventions of form, text type and of literary and rhetorical techniques allow for a better and deeper understanding of a text?
- How are judgements made about the merit of a text? What makes a text better than others?
- Is the study of texts better approached by means of a temporal perspective, grouping texts according to when they were written, or by means of a thematic approach, grouping them according to the theme or concern they share? What impact does each one of them have on knowledge of the discipline?

- How useful are classifications of texts according to form, text type and period? How do they contribute to the understanding of communication and its development?

## The learner portfolio

The learner portfolio is a central element of the language A: language and literature course, and is mandatory for all students. It is an individual collection of student work done throughout the two years of the course.

The work carried out for the learner portfolio forms the basis of preparation for the assessment, although the portfolio itself will not be directly assessed or moderated by the IB. However, it is a fundamental element of the course, providing evidence of the student's work and a reflection of their preparation for the assessment components. Schools may be required to submit these learner portfolios in cases in which it is necessary to determine the authenticity of student's work in a component, to certify that the principles of academic honesty have been respected or to evaluate the implementation of the syllabus in a school.

The learner portfolio is a place for a student to explore and reflect upon literary and non-literary texts, and to establish connections among them and with the areas of exploration and the central concepts in the subject. In the learner portfolio, students will be expected to reflect on their responses to the works being studied in the corresponding area of exploration. They will also be expected to establish connections between these works and previous ones they have read, and between their perspectives and values as readers and those of their peers. As they progress through the syllabus, it is expected that these connections will be drawn between works within and across areas of exploration, and that they will provide a foundation for the construction of broader knowledge about the transactions between texts, culture and identity.

The learner portfolio is also a space in which students can prepare for assessment. They will use the portfolio to make decisions about the most appropriate and productive connections between the works they have studied and the assessment components. It should be introduced at the beginning of the course and become increasingly important as students progress, and prepare for external and internal assessment.

The learner portfolio must consist of a diversity of formal and informal responses to the literary and non-literary texts studied, which may come in a range of critical and/or creative forms, and in different

media. It is the student's own record of discovery and development throughout the course. It could be used to document:

- reflections related to the guiding conceptual questions of the course
- reflections on the assumptions, beliefs, and values that frame a response to texts
- explorations of literary texts and the insights they offer into social, global and real-world issues
- detailed evaluations and critical analysis of works, literary texts or extracts which explore the potential meanings for language used in them
- reflections on the connections across a range of texts studied
- experiments with form, media and technology
- creative writing tasks for exploration of different literary forms and development of the students' personal responses to works/texts
- reading, research and inquiry carried out beyond the classroom experience
- records of valued feedback received
- reports of classroom or group activities or discussions that explore the diverse values and perspectives negotiated and the process of negotiation in itself
- challenges faced and achievements
- selections of suitable extracts that could form the basis of the individual oral
- instances of self-assessment to evaluate the student's own progress.

Teachers are free to monitor and set guidelines for the learner portfolios, but students should be encouraged to shape them in ways that allow them to independently record their personal development. The type of portfolio the students keep—digital or non-digital, traditional or multimodal—will be dictated by individual learning preferences. Students should be allowed to explore different options freely.

It is expected that the work necessary to meet the requirements in all assessment components will have evolved and been drawn from the contents of the portfolio. To that effect, each student's portfolio should include at the end the "Works studied form" detailing the works that have been selected as part of the course and how they have been made to interact with the assessment

components. The assessment section contains suggestions on how to make use of the learner portfolio in the preparation for each assessment component.

Examples of the kind of work that could be included in the portfolio are provided in the teacher support materials (TSM.)

## Development of linguistic skills

Students will use and develop the following linguistic skills at all levels in the three studies in language and literature courses.

### **Receptive skills**

Students will understand and evaluate a wide range of works, attending to textual detail, applying knowledge of textual conventions and making informed interpretations, analyses, comparisons and evaluations. They will consider arguments, distinguishing the main points from relevant supporting details and explanations. They will use a variety of strategies to deduce meaning and move beyond the literal level to broader implications.

### **Productive skills**

Students will present and develop their ideas and opinions on a variety of topics, orally and in writing. They will construct and support complex arguments with explanations and examples. They will experiment with form by carrying out, as part of their class activities, transformative and re-creative activities either in writing or as performance. They will speak and write at length and with purpose in order to meet a wide range of communicative needs; describing, narrating, comparing, explaining, persuading and evaluating.

### **Interactive skills**

Students will begin, maintain and close oral exchanges, displaying the ability to adjust style or emphasis; using a variety of strategies to maintain the flow of discussions; attending to diverse perspectives and opinions. They will take into account audience and purpose employing appropriate language, tone of voice, body language and gesture. They will also be able to interact with texts and maintain written conversation in various registers and on various platforms.

## Conceptual understanding

The document *What is an IB education?* states: “IB programmes offer students access to a broad and balanced range of academic studies and learning experiences. They promote conceptual learning, focusing on powerful organizing ideas that are relevant across subject areas, and that help integrate learning and add coherence to the curriculum” (see the “Broad, balanced, conceptual and connected” section).

All DP language programme subject groups promote a vision of learning in which the development of language skills and conceptual understandings of language are complementary to each other, so that the total learning experience of the student is as robust as possible. As a result, DP students become more accomplished communicators in the languages they study when their abilities to read, write and speak about course content are reinforced and extended by an understanding of why and how people use language to communicate.

In particular, the approach to developing conceptual understandings of language in the DP languages programme is designed using the following guiding principles.

- DP students with experience of the PYP or the MYP are provided with frequent opportunities to develop further their conceptual understandings of language (PYP) or their understanding of the key and related concepts in the MYP language and literature and language acquisition courses
- DP students are encouraged to apply what they already know about other languages and cultures —through formal study or personal experience—in order to enhance their overall learning process
- DP students are encouraged to consider broad questions about language and culture as appropriate to their course of study in order to develop international-mindedness and increase self-awareness as inquirers in their own learning process

### **Conceptual understanding in studies in language and literature courses**

Concepts are vital in studies in language and literature courses since they help to organise and guide the study of texts across the three areas of exploration. The concepts interact with the three areas of exploration in numerous ways and contribute a sense of continuity in the transition from one area to the next. They also facilitate the process of establishing connections between texts, making it easier for students to identify different ways in which the texts they study relate to one another. Although

they are not explicitly assessed in any component, the concepts constitute an essential part of a student's investigation and should therefore be included in the discussion of each of the texts studied.

The seven concepts which structure the teaching and learning of these courses have been selected because of the central position they occupy in the study of both language and literature. They foreground aspects of linguistic and literary study that have been the focus of attention and inquiry. Brief explanations of the seven concepts are provided. These explanations are not meant to be exhaustive, although they will serve as a guiding set of ideas for the course.

For ideas on how to approach these concepts through class activities, please consult the "Approaches to teaching and approaches to learning in studies in language and literature" section in this guide or the *Language A teacher support material*.

## **Identity**

When reading texts, students will encounter and interact with a multiplicity of perspectives, voices and characters. It is usual when reading and interpreting a text to assume that the views are to some extent representative of the writer's identity. However, the relationship between an author and the different perspectives and voices they assume in the texts is frequently complex, and this makes the concept of identity an elusive one. The figure that emerges from the reading of various texts by the same author adds to the complexity of the discussion. Conversely, the ways in which the identity of a reader comes into play at the moment of reading a text are equally central to the analysis of the act of reading and interpretation.

## **Culture**

The concept of culture is central to the study of language and literature. It raises the question of how a text relates to the context of its production and reception, and to the respective values, beliefs and attitudes prevalent in them. This concept also plays an important role with regards to the relationship that is established between an individual text and the writing tradition that precedes it. In both senses, the application of this concept to the study of a text should prompt reflection on the extent to which it is the product of a particular cultural and literary context and how it interacts with it.

## **Creativity**

Creativity plays an important part in the experience of reading and writing. The concept is fundamental to analyse and understand the act of writing, and the role that imagination plays. When applied to the act of reading, creativity highlights the importance of the reader being able to engage in an imaginative interaction with a text which generates a range of potential meanings from it, above and beyond established interpretations. Creativity is also related to the notion of originality and to the question of the extent to which it is important or desirable in the production and reception of a text.

### **Communication**

The concept of communication revolves around the question of the relationship that is established between a writer and a reader by means of a text. The extent to which writers facilitate communication through their choices of style and structure may be an aspect to analyse in this exploration. The writer may also have a particular audience in mind which may mean assumptions have been made about the reader's knowledge or views which might make communication with some readers easier than with others. Alternatively, the amount of cooperation that a text demands from a reader for communication to take place, and the readiness of the reader to engage is also important as a topic for discussion. Even with cooperative readers, the meaning of a text is never univocal, which makes the concept of communication a particularly productive, and potentially problematic one in relation to both literary and non-literary texts.

### **Perspective**

A text may offer a multiplicity of perspectives which may, or may not, reflect the views of its author. Readers have also their own perspectives which they bring to their interaction with the text. This variety of perspectives impacts on the interpretation of a text and therefore deserves critical attention and discussion. The fact that the acts of reading and writing happen in a given time and place poses the additional question of how far the contexts of production and reception have influenced and even shaped those perspectives.

### **Transformation**

The study of the connections among texts constitutes the focus of one of three areas of exploration, namely intertextuality: connecting texts. The complex ways in which texts refer to one another, appropriate elements from each other and transform them to suit a different aesthetic or

communicative purpose, are evidence of the importance of transformation in the process of creating a text. Additionally, the act of reading is potentially transformative in itself, both for the text and the reader. Different readers may transform a text with their personal interpretation. The text can also have an impact on the reader which potentially might lead to action and to the transformation of reality.

## Representation

The way in which language and literature relate to reality has been the subject of long running debate among linguists and literary theorists. Statements and manifestos by writers have made claims about this relationship which range from affirming that literature should represent reality as accurately as possible, to claiming art's absolute detachment and freedom from reality and any duty to represent it in the work of art. Irrespective of such a discussion, the concept is a central one to the subject in connection with the way in which form and structure interact with, and relate to, meaning.

## Principles of course design

The language A: language and literature course allows teachers significant freedom in organising and structuring their courses. The three areas of exploration focus on different approaches to the study of texts and do not establish any requirements about the text types or literary forms to be studied in each one of areas individually. The requirements on the provenance of the works—whether they are studied in the original language they were written in or are studied in translation; whether authors are on the *Prescribed reading list* or freely chosen—must be met throughout the course. There is no prescribed method of how they should be distributed across the areas of exploration.

Additionally, as the syllabus does not bind the areas of exploration to particular assessment components, there is room for individual decisions to be made by students about the works for each of their assessment tasks. The freedom to make course design decisions requires careful planning to guarantee that requirements are met throughout the teaching of the syllabus material.

The central principles of variety, integration, autonomy and accountability are aimed at providing guidance for teachers in structuring their courses and advising students how to make sensible and careful decisions.

## Variety

Teachers must ensure that:

- the choice of texts represents as wide a variety of text types, literary forms, places, times and voices as possible
- the organisation of the texts into the three areas of exploration allows for sufficient opportunities in each area to connect, compare and contrast texts written originally in the language studied with those studied in translation, texts from different literary forms and text types and texts from diverse times and places
- the texts that are chosen represent a balance between canonical voices and newer, less traditional, voices (this is so that students are exposed to different conceptions of language and literature, and have a sense of the current linguistic and literary developments and of the accompanying theoretical constructs)
- whenever possible, student involvement is encouraged in the selection of texts, so that individual preferences can be considered and hopefully catered for.

## Integration

The three areas of exploration should not be thought of as isolated compartments, but as complementary approaches in the study of the selected texts. While each will propose a specific lens through which to explore a text, it is expected that teachers will take advantage of opportunities to make consistent references to the immanent, the contextual and the comparative study of texts, and attempt to integrate them throughout the course.

The syllabus offers various other ways of integrating the three areas of exploration.

- The learner portfolio is a space in which students will be expected to reflect on the texts being studied in the corresponding area of exploration and establish connections between these texts and previous ones read. As they progress through the syllabus, it is to be expected that these connections will be drawn between texts within and across areas of exploration.
- Assessment components like the individual oral or paper 2 will prompt students to elaborate on points of contact between texts as they think of possible options to choose for these assessments.

Teachers should encourage students to take advantage of the flexibility the syllabus allows and not to limit themselves in their choice of texts to individual areas of exploration.

- The seven central concepts in studies in language and literature courses provide sustained lines of inquiry that run through the three areas of exploration.

### **Autonomy**

For students to be able to make careful decisions about the choice of texts to use for assessment components, they need to be encouraged to think of their learning in a more autonomous way. Teachers should foster this by initially ensuring students have access to information about course aims, syllabus requirements, assessment components and criteria as early as possible. Studies in language and literature courses require a high level of agency on the part of the students regarding the preparation of their work for the assessment components. For that to be successful, students must be made aware of what is expected of them in each area of exploration, and for each assessment component.

It is also important that there should be ongoing assessment of the students' progress towards their goals. It is likely that students will elaborate and follow individual routes in their preparation for the assessment components. They will, however, require guidance on the part of the teacher with regards to the appropriateness of their choice of works, and the associated concept or global issue. Regular instances of self-assessment and peer-assessment will also help students to carry out an evaluation of their progress towards the objectives the course sets for them.

### **Accountability**

A prominent feature of the structure of studies in language and literature courses is the amount of latitude it permits to both teachers and students in their choice of pathways to comply with syllabus requirements. The syllabus is not prescriptive and this means there is plenty of room for individual choice.

Both teachers and students should be aware that this flexibility does not imply leniency in relation to compliance with the requirements of the course. Teachers must make sure that:

- the requirements of the course are met by the whole class

- each student has a clearly laid-out plan for addressing the demands of all assessment components which guarantees that all the necessary texts will have been read and studied,
- to the best of their knowledge, no work will be used for two different assessment components
- the principles of academic honesty are respected.

